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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION; RUSSIA NUCLEAR SUPER-MISSILE; ROBERT
ZOELICK APPOINTED NEW WB HEAD; CIS ON ARGENTINA; 05/30/07

11. SUMMARY STATEMENT

Key international stories today include the test of a Russian nuclear missile; the appointment of Robert Zoellick as the new head of the World Bank; and the implications of the USG Consular Information Sheet on Argentina.

12. OPINION PIECES AND EDITORIALS

- "Nostalgia"

Claudio Mario Aliscioni, columnist of leading "Clarín," writes (05/30) "The Russian missile test is not only the timely implementation of a strategy. It should also be understood as evidence of that other intangible entity called nostalgia. Obviously enough, Vladimir Putin's decision is intended to set a limit on the US, which is always willing to remove power from (Russia). However, it is also a gesture toward Russia's interior, which is still stirred by nationalistic dreams and the ghost of a huge empire that no longer exists.

"While Russia owns huge natural resources, its GDP lowered to position 15 on the global ranking, it has high corruption and its technology is outdated in many areas... Nostalgia for the past serves then to cover the holes of the present."

- "Another man of Bush is appointed to lead the World Bank"

Leonardo Mindez, on special assignment in Washington for leading "Clarín," penned (05/30) "Those who expected that the downfall of Paul Wolfowitz could lead to a more democratic approach to appointing the new head of the World Bank must be disappointed. The White House preferred again to appoint a man from its own entourage - former USTR and Assistant Secretary of State Robert Zoellick.

"... In 1998, he signed a letter along with Wolfowitz in which a group of neo-conservative intellectuals asked Clinton to remove Saddam Hussein in Iraq.

"Shortly afterwards, he acted as a consultant in foreign policy for Bush junior's election campaign, during which he devised the 'evil' notion to refer to US enemies... However, in contrast to the outgoing WB head, Zoellick had no direct influence on the current USG's military policy.

"Instead, as USTR between 2001 and 2005, he was the main promoter of China's entry into the WTO and the FTAA, and he negotiated the FTAs signed with Chile, Singapore, Australia, Morocco, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Honduras, Guatemala, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic and Bahrain.

"... Today, the White House will formally announce its candidate,

trusting that he will be confirmed by the WB Board. Zoellick will be the one in charge of recovering confidence in a damaged institution, which Wolfowitz, his old friend, will leave on June 30."

- "Wolfowitz's fatal mistake"

Daily-of-record "La Nacion" carries an op-ed piece by contributor Mario del Carril, who writes (05/30) "In an unprecedented measure, the most important European countries made Paul Wolfowitz, head of the WB, resign because he had infringed on the institution's rules... Therefore, they made him resign to protect the institution from corruption..."

"... Wolfowitz could have saved his position had he immediately apologized and offered his resignation.

"Knowing the WB and the fact that its member-countries rarely want to oppose the USG (which bluntly defended Wolfowitz), those gestures would have created a framework of good will, and his resignation would not have been accepted.

"... Nonetheless, Wolfowitz did not apologize... His fatal mistake is that he believed he was involved in a typical Washingtonian scandal that his critics were Democrats and that Bush would be the one who would decide. On the contrary, he was involved in a scandal in 180 capital cities, and many were in charge of making decisions. In other words, he was in a multinational institution he was not able to handle and this is why he was 'fired.'"

- "Prevented tourists"

An editorial in daily-of-record "La Nacion" reads (05/30) "Every year, the US updates its consular report addressed to US citizens traveling to different countries including Argentina... The latest US report has not been benevolent to Argentina.

"The Consular Information Sheet is a report called for by the US law...

"Regardless of the dislike the US consular report must have caused in Argentine authorities, it only describes the dangers to which the inhabitants of our country are daily exposed in the main Argentine cities and which are widely reported by the mass media...

"... While Argentine authorities have said that the report issued by the US consular office are 'continued characterizations that do not correspond to reality' and that unleash unjustified alarm, the way to solve the situations that could jeopardize tourism of any origin, whether foreign or domestic, is not denying or downplaying them. On the contrary, solutions will be obtained if one starts by accepting that problems do effectively exist and that they should be faced with a steady and serious attitude."

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